

REVIEW.

Thursday, May 21. 1713.

Return where I left off, to that just Complaint against the Rage of Parties, which I think is our present Ruin. I spoke in my last to it, as it concerns the present Subject of a Treaty of Commerce and Navigation with *France*; of which I have been backward to give my Opinion; but who withhold himself from speaking, and if you will hear me at all, hear me now, and I assure you I'll speak now with the utmost Impartiality.

It was always my Opinion, and is often printed in the *Review* some Years ago, that we should, even in the time of War, have had an open Trade with *France*, and I gave you this Reason for it, Because I thought to Trade with every Nation we could be able; and that while we kept up our high Duties and Prohibitions upon their Growth and Manufactures, and they, by the necessity of things, were oblig'd to buy great Quantities of our Goods; the Balance of Trade was against them in our Favour, and to shut out or prohibit Commerce with a Nation, whose Trade was our Advantage, was to rob ourselves of those Advantages, and pick our own pockets.

Let no Man say this is a new Thought of mine, proposed upon the World just now, or written to satisfy any body; I have frequently publish'd it in the 4th, 6th, and 7th Volumes of this Work, two Years, four Years, and six Years ago; and I shall still confirm my Judgment, if I should contradict it now, when Experience has establish'd my Opinion by many common Circumstances.

At the same time, and perhaps as often, I have intimated, That as our high Duties on Wine and Brandy, and Prohibitions upon the Silk Manufactures, &c. from *France*, were the only things which maintain'd this Scale of Commerce to us, which ran so high against us before; so if ever a Peace came, it would be our Interest to keep up those Duties, at least to such a height, as should in so great a measure lessen the Consumption of Wines, Brandeys, and such like in *England*, that Trade might not return into the same Channel, and run against us to so great a degree, as it did before. And to this I adhere still; for as Truth never opposes it self, so it is my Opinion, whatever Clamours some have made, that as

great a Work as this Paper is, and as many Volumes as I have written of it, there will not be found one thing in it, which if honestly and impartially taken, and not wrested by Party and Prejudice, will contradict another; and I'll Dispute it with any body that has Manners enough to Argue calmly with me, whenever they please.

Now as to Trade; As this was always my Opinion, and is so still, the Foundation is to be built thus. The Trade to *France* can never be wisely settled, except it be so settled, that the Balance may run, as we know it may do, on our side. The next Question is, and a close Question it is too, How shall this correspond with the present Treaty?

I am not setting up for an Advocate for the present Treaty, they that made it want none of my Pleadings, nor will I undertake to answer all that I every Day hear objected against it, any more than I will defend the Reason, Manner, and Temper of your Objections: Nothing can be done in such a Case as this, till you can on both sides Reason calmly, and Argue with a cool and temperate Mind.

The Trade with *France* is the Question; Either you must come to a Settlement of it, or you must not; If it be not worth our while to Trade with *France*, why have we so long complain'd of the *French* for prohibiting our Manufactures? On the other hand, If the *French* can make all their own Manufactures, and enough for the *Spanish* and *Turky* Trades besides, and that cheaper than we can do, what signifies then our opening a Trade with them at all? Nay, let but any Man prove this, and I will for ever insist on it, that we ought not to abate one Farthing of our high Duties upon their Goods, other than we find for our Interest and Convenience other ways; that is, we ought not to yield an Inch to purchase a Trade of our own Manufactures with them; For who would give any Consideration for the liberty to Trade to a Place, where they want nothing of what we would carry to sell? This would be like the *Mare* which cost a great deal to be catch'd, and when she was catch'd, was good for nothing. To yield largely to *France* for a Liberty to carry our Woollen Manufactures there, when they make them cheaper already, and more in quantity than

than they can use, would be an Absurdity too gross to be spoken of.

On the other hand, *If it be worth our while to Trade to France* for our Woollen Manufactures, if our Goods will force their own way, if the French Market will take off large Quantities of our Woollen Goods; if our selling Goods in France, by showing the Goodness and Value of them, will encrease the Demand for them, and will consequently lessen and discourage the French in their carrying on the like, and make them less able to supply Foreign Markets also: And if this Trade will follow upon the French reducing the Duties and Imposts of our said Manufactures there, to the Rule of the Tariff of 1664.

If these things are so, then pray, Gentlemen, ask your selves two things, and when they are also answered, you will be your own Judges about the Treaty of Commerce.

1. Can you expect the French to take off all their own high Duties, Prohibitions and Customs which have been laid upon our Goods, from the Year 1664. and at the same time we continue the Prohibitions, high Duties, and Imposts laid here upon their Goods? Can you demand to be made able to Trade with them, while you foreclose and exclude their Trading with you?
2. Is it not worth our while to yield up several points of Advantage in Trade, to gain so considerable an Encrease of our Woollen Manufacture, as may be vended Yearly in France? *That is, still supposing we shall have a Market there.*

I easily foresee what will be said, and your Petitions, no doubt, will be many from the Silk broad Weavers, the Alamode and Lustring-Spoilers (Makers I should say) from the Portugal Merchants, the Bay and Say-Makers, and abundance more; I may speak to them all, and perhaps to their Satisfaction too; for this Treaty is not yet adjusted, and when it is, I believe will not be done so much to their Prejudice as they fear, at least I hope so.

But first you must settle Generals with me —
Will France be a Market for our Woollen Manu-

factures, or will it not? That's the Fundamental, than the Principle I Argue from.

I'll tell you my Opinion frankly, It will certainly be a Market for our Woollen Manufactures, or for our Wooll that makes them. Of which largely, very largely by it self.

But to that Question, *Will it?* Or, *Will it not?* the Word? *If not,* never Treat with them at all; keep your Doors fast against their Wine and Brand as you would against a Thief, or against a Bail when you fear to be Arrested; and against the wrought Silks, as you would against a Murtheer: it is present death to your Trade to reduce the Customs of Goods with a Nation that will flow all upon you, and take nothing from you; keep as you are, by all means; to make a Treaty of Commerce with them, is to ruin our Commerce and establish theirs.

But on the other hand, if the Affirmative is the Case, if upon opening the Trade you shall have a new Out-let for your Manufactures, and France will consume great Quantities of Woollen Goods; short, if an open Trade with France will be an Advantage to our Manufactures, then we ought to Trade with them; nay, we ought to do every reasonable thing to obtain and introduce that Trade, and if in doing so, any lesser Advantages in other Branches of Trade are dropt and lost, and there is a necessity to drop them, you must look upon that as a greater Advantage, not on the lesser Damage, in the following Case.

*When casual Fire seizes on the Town,
Some Houses are blown up, and some pull'd down;
None blame the Evil, for 'tis understood,
A private Mischiefe for a publick Good.*

This I observe as the Principle, I say, to Argue from; and all that may be said for, or against the Treaty of Commerce, will turn upon this one Point (*viz.*) Whether it be worth our while to open Trade with France or no? If it is, you cannot reject but it must be done upon Equalities and Proportions, or not done at all.